

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for repairing a damaged myocardium in a mammal, comprising:
 - a) providing a three-dimensional porous polysaccharide matrix;
 - b) introducing mammalian cells ~~from the same species~~ into said matrix;
 - c) growing said cells in said matrix in vitro, until a tissue-engineered biograft is formed, comprising a contracting tissue; and
 - d) transplanting the tissue-engineered biograft onto the myocardial tissue or myocardial scar tissue of said mammal, optionally previously removing scar or dead tissue from the site of implantation;
wherein the mammalian cells are selected from the group consisting of fetal cardiomyocytes, neonatal cardiomyocytes, adult cardiac cells, fibroblasts, smooth muscle cells, endothelial cells, skeletal myoblasts, mesenchymal stem cells and embryonic stem cells; and
wherein said polysaccharide matrix further comprises controlled-release polymeric microspheres, said microspheres being capable of releasing soluble angiogenic growth factors in a controlled manner.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said polysaccharide matrix comprises an alginate polysaccharide.
3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the polysaccharide matrix generates a scaffold.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the mammalian cells comprise:

- a) fetal cardiomyocytes or neonatal cardiomyocytes or mixtures thereof; and
- b) endothelial cells, cardiofibroblasts or smooth muscle cells or mixtures thereof.

6. (Original) A method according to claim 5, wherein said endothelial cells form capillary-like tubes within the scaffold.

7-8 (Canceled)

9. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said myocardial damage is due to myocardial infarction.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein said myocardial damage is due to congenital heart defect.

11-15 (Canceled)

16. (Previously Presented) A tissue-engineered cardiac biograft for transplantation into myocardial tissue or myocardial scar tissue, comprising:

a porous polysaccharide matrix comprising controlled-release polymeric microspheres capable of releasing soluble angiogenic growth factors; and
mammalian cells selected from the group consisting of fetal cardiomyocytes, neonatal cardiomyocytes, adult cardiac cells, fibroblasts, smooth muscle cells, endothelial cells, skeletal myoblasts, mesenchymal stem cells and embryonic stem cells;

wherein said cells have been cultured in said matrix in vitro.

17. (Original) A tissue-engineered cardiac biograft according to claim 16, wherein said polysaccharide is an alginate.

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein the polysaccharide matrix generates a scaffold.

19. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing a three-dimensional tissue-engineered biograft comprising:

- a) providing a porous polysaccharide matrix comprising microspheres capable of releasing soluble angiogenic growth factors; and
- b) co-culturing the porous polysaccharide matrix in vitro with mammalian cells selected from the group consisting of fetal cardiomyocytes, neonatal cardiomyocytes, adult cardiac cells, fibroblasts, smooth muscle cells, endothelial cells, skeletal myoblasts, mesenchymal stem cells and embryonic stem cells, until a cardiac-like tissue is formed, comprising a tissue-engineered biograft.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the porous polysaccharide matrix comprises an alginate polysaccharide.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the porous polysaccharide matrix generates a scaffold.